



For eligible employees of the

State of California

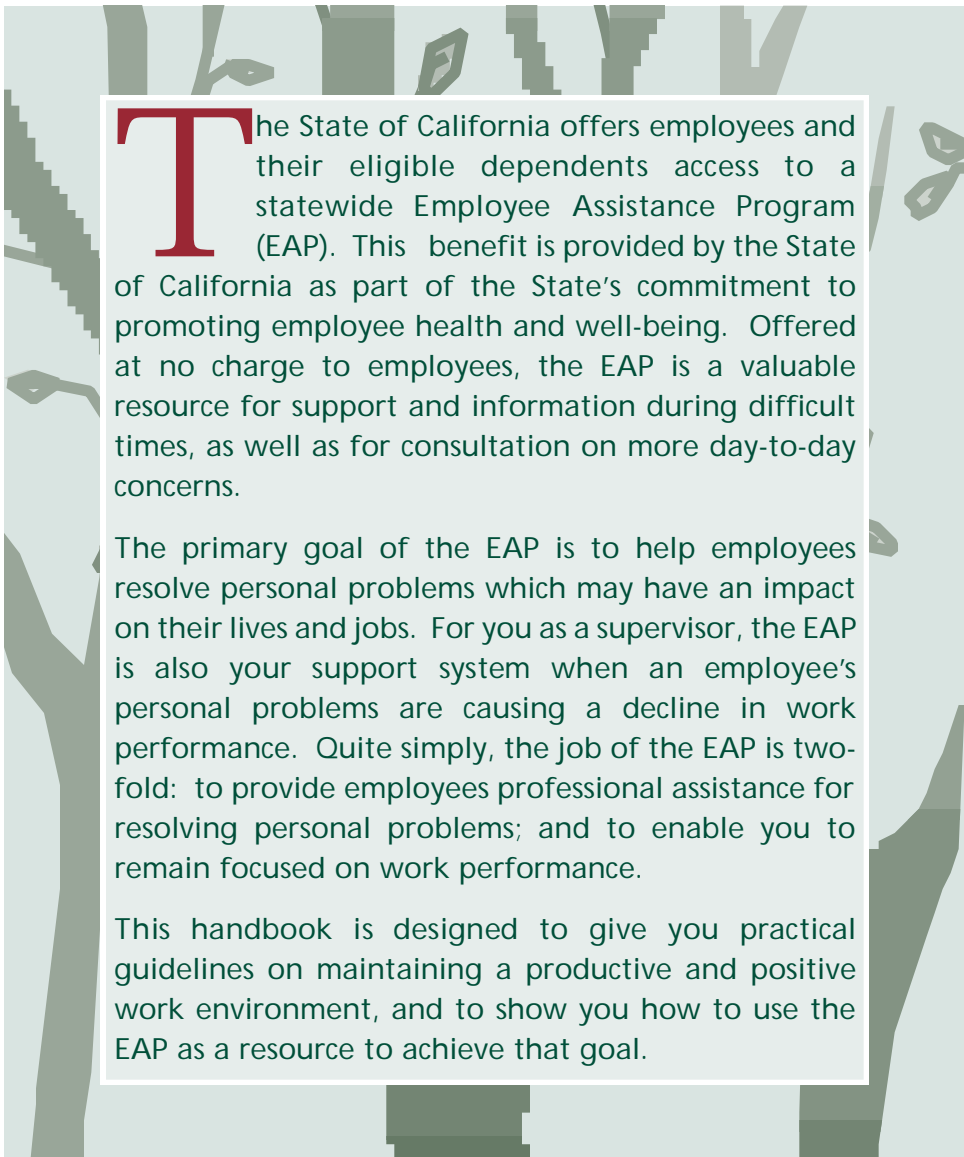
Employee

Assistance

Program

# *Supervisor's Handbook*

Administered by  
MBC of California  
an affiliate of  
Magellan Behavioral Health



**T**he State of California offers employees and their eligible dependents access to a statewide Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This benefit is provided by the State of California as part of the State's commitment to promoting employee health and well-being. Offered at no charge to employees, the EAP is a valuable resource for support and information during difficult times, as well as for consultation on more day-to-day concerns.

The primary goal of the EAP is to help employees resolve personal problems which may have an impact on their lives and jobs. For you as a supervisor, the EAP is also your support system when an employee's personal problems are causing a decline in work performance. Quite simply, the job of the EAP is two-fold: to provide employees professional assistance for resolving personal problems; and to enable you to remain focused on work performance.

This handbook is designed to give you practical guidelines on maintaining a productive and positive work environment, and to show you how to use the EAP as a resource to achieve that goal.

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The State of California EAP is offered through Merit Behavioral Care of California (MBC), an affiliate of Magellan Behavioral Health. Headquartered in South San Francisco, MBC has been serving California residents since 1983. With EAP counselors available throughout the state, MBC is here to provide employees with the assistance they need.

## Your EAP at a Glance

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Balancing all the demands in our lives can be difficult and, from time-to-time, everyone needs an objective viewpoint or a professional perspective in resolving a personal problem. That is when the EAP can help.

The EAP is a voluntary, pre-paid and confidential program that provides problem identification, counseling and referral services for employees and their families. Merit Behavioral Care of California's (MBC) EAP counselors are experts in providing support, understanding and guidance for a broad range of needs, including:

- parenting and dependent care concerns
- family and relationship issues
- alcohol and drug abuse
- emotional problems
- financial and legal problems
- conflicts at work or home
- other personal problems



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### How to Access the EAP

There are three types of referrals to the EAP:

**Self-Referral** – Most employees and their family members will access the EAP on their own by calling MBC toll-free at 1-800-6-EAP-4-CA (1-800-632-7422). This option is called a self-referral. When employees contact the EAP directly, supervisors are not aware of the call and are not involved in the EAP process.

However, you do have an important role in the self-referral process. You can help ensure that your staff understands the EAP and how to use the services available. If you are enthusiastic about the EAP, chances are your employees will use this valuable resource when they need assistance. For additional information on the self-referral process, please refer to your MBC Employee Assistance Program brochure.

**Informal Supervisor Referral** (or *Supervisor Recommendation*) – As a supervisor, you may want to help an employee whom you sense is struggling with a personal problem; or perhaps an employee has asked you for help in solving a problem. You can play a key role in helping the employee get immediate assistance by suggesting that s/he use the EAP. Remember to make your recommendation in a private, supportive manner.

**Formal Supervisor Referral** – A formal referral to the EAP is made by a supervisor when an employee's work performance has shown a significant pattern of decline. You have a responsibility to both the State and the employee to address work performance problems as early as possible. The EAP can be particularly valuable in assisting the employee to address personal problems that may be contributing to the decline in job performance. MBC has specialized Management Consultants who can help you in two key ways: provide guidance on how to communicate the problem to the employee; and offer assistance in the most productive and appropriate manner.

Later in this handbook, we provide you with specific guidelines on how to make a formal referral. Summarized below are the key steps you should follow when making a formal referral:

1. Identify when an employee's work performance has declined.
2. Document work performance problems, behavior changes, absenteeism, etc.
3. Contact the EAP to consult with an MBC Management Consultant about the work performance issue.
4. Prepare a Formal Referral Letter. A sample letter will be provided during your consultation.
5. Arrange for a confidential meeting with the employee to discuss the work performance problem, expectations, and make a formal referral to the EAP.
6. Continue to monitor the employee's work performance and follow through with appropriate disciplinary procedures, if necessary.

While a continuing pattern of decline in an employee's work performance may be a result of a personal problem and warrant a formal supervisory referral, you should not use the formal referral process based solely on an employee's personal problems if there are no resultant work performance issues. For example, an employee who is suspected of having a substance abuse problem and/or who has a positive drug screen test but does not have a decline in work performance should not be referred to the EAP through the Formal Supervisory Referral process. However, it is acceptable for the employee to access the EAP through a self-referral or for the supervisor to informally refer the employee to use the EAP to address any personal problems, including substance abuse, the employee may be experiencing. Additionally, the supervisor should refer to his/her department's internal policy on employee substance abuse procedures.



It is accepted and encouraged, however, for an employee to either self-refer him/her self or for the supervisor to suggest the use of the EAP to address any personal problems (including substance abuse) that the employee may be experiencing.

Remember, the EAP is a **voluntary and confidential** program and, even in the case of a formal referral, the decision to use the EAP is up to the employee. MBC cannot disclose any information to you (aside from letting you know if the employee scheduled and attended the first appointment)



## The EAP Counseling Process

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Regardless of how the employee accesses the EAP, s/he will be referred to an EAP counselor or other resource that can best assist with the specific problem the employee is facing. To ensure that employees and their families receive the individualized assistance they need, MBC's EAP counselors include psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, certified alcohol and drug counselors, licensed marriage and family therapists, and licensed attorneys. Among these professionals are counselors who also have particular expertise in providing counseling for dependent care and financial concerns.

The EAP counselor will help the employee assess the situation, identify options and develop a plan of action. This three-step process is outlined below.

### *Step #1: Clarify the Problem*

During this first step, the EAP counselor will help the employee clarify the underlying problems that caused him/her to seek assistance or to be formally referred by the supervisor. This step ensures that the real problem is addressed.

### *Step #2: Identify Options*

Together, the employee and EAP counselor will explore possible options and resources to help resolve the problem the employee is currently facing. The EAP counselor provides an objective point of view and can offer suggestions that most people would not consider on their own.

### *Step #3: Develop a Plan of Action*

An individualized plan of action is then developed for the employee. The plan may involve continued short-term counseling through the EAP, or referral to an appropriate professional resource in the community. With the employee's consent, family members may be included in counseling as part of the action plan for problem resolution. In all cases, the decision of how to handle the problem is always up to the employee.

The EAP counseling process may occur over the telephone or in-person at a location convenient to the employee, depending upon the specific needs of the employee.

## Tools & Resources

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Motivating employees, reviewing performance, ensuring productivity and solving other work-related problems are just a few of the responsibilities you have as a supervisor. Your job is challenging and when employee performance problems occur, getting the job done well can be very difficult. In fact, addressing work performance problems is one of a supervisor's most stressful responsibilities. How do you discuss the situation with the employee? What can you do to minimize the impact of one employee's performance decline on the rest of the work unit?

This section of your Supervisor's Handbook is designed to provide you with answers to these questions. On the following pages, you will learn how to:

- Use the *EAP as your Consultant* for performance concerns;
- Recognize *Warning Signs* that signal an employee may have a potential problem;
- Prepare *Documentation and Formal Referral Letters*; and
- Address job performance problems objectively by using the *Supportive Confrontation* technique as described on pages 12-19 of this handbook.

Together, these tools and resources can help you successfully handle tough workplace issues.

### Warning Signs

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Everyone has a bad day from time-to-time. And a few bad days do not necessarily signal a personal or work performance problem. However, changes in work performance that occur over a period of time may indicate that a problem exists. Examples of such changes include:



#### **Absenteeism**

- Arriving late or leaving early
- Excessive excused and unexcused absences
- Frequent Monday/Friday absences, or absences that follow a pattern
- Extended lunches and/or breaks
- Frequent absences from assigned work areas

**Absenteeism** (continued)

- Frequent absences for minor illnesses
- Peculiar and improbable excuses for absences
- Repeated requests for time off by telephone without advance notice

**Work Pattern Changes**

- Sporadic work performance
- Lower quality and quantity of work
- Impaired judgment
- Confusion (e.g., difficulty in recalling instructions, detail)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty working with others
- Omitting necessary details
- Procrastination
- Difficulty in meeting deadlines or missing deadlines
- Chronic tiredness and/or drowsiness
- Lack of interest or participation
- Excessive amount of personal time on the telephone

**Relationships with Others**

- Edgy, irritable
- Over-sensitive, over-reactive
- Suspicious
- Intolerant
- Resentful
- Withdrawn or moody
- Blaming others
- Increased nervousness
- Avoids co-workers

**Other Changes**

- Non-work related accidents
- Accidents while working
- Deterioration in appearance
- Loss of interest, decrease in activities
- Borrowing money from others



Being aware of these warning signs will help you recognize when a potential problem is developing and enable you to address it immediately.



## Documentation

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The key to early recognition of a performance problem and resolution is to identify a pattern of decline. In addition to being aware of the warning signs that may signal a potential problem, you may find it useful to keep a record of performance concerns.

Documentation is a useful tool that will help you to do the following:

- Focus on observable, verifiable facts in an objective manner;
- Identify a possible pattern of behavior;
- Work with the EAP to identify the key problem(s);
- Determine when to address your concerns with the employee;
- Prepare for and conduct an effective Supportive Confrontation meeting, a technique that enables you to objectively address performance issues during a formal referral;
- Help the employee to recognize both the problem and its severity by presenting the work performance decline in a factual, non-judgmental manner; and
- Stay focused on job performance.

Listed below are suggested guidelines for documenting current performance concerns. We also recommend that you check with your Personnel Office for any specific procedures to follow when documenting poor work performance.

- Be specific regarding the date, time and place of unsatisfactory job performance;
- Provide actual observations, not your opinions or conclusions;
- Include examples of satisfactory and excellent work, as well as that which is below par;
- Keep records confidential and update them on a regular basis (daily, weekly, monthly);
- Focus on performance (not on personal problems);
- Provide factual information that shows the employee's job performance over a period of time; and
- Be objective, fair and consistent.

## DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

When preparing your documentation, it may be helpful to review the following checklist to ensure completeness and accuracy. Select those elements which apply.

- ☐ Did you record the documentation promptly, while your memory was still fresh?
- ☐ Have you indicated the date, time and location of the incident(s) documented?
- ☐ Did you record the action taken or the behavior exhibited?
- ☐ Did you indicate the person(s) or work products involved?
- ☐ Have you listed the specific performance standards violated or exceeded?
- ☐ Have you indicated specific rules or regulations violated or surpassed?
- ☐ Did you record the consequences of the action or behavior on the employee's total work performance and/or on the operation of the work unit?
- ☐ Have you been objective, recording observations rather than impressions?
- ☐ Did you indicate the employee's reaction to your efforts to improve his/her performance?

### DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLE

#### PERFORMANCE JOB RECORD

Employee Name: John

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Change in Performance</u>
Monday	04/04/94	9:30 a.m.	Absent. Said it was due to "recurring and very painful stomach problem."
Wednesday	04/06/94	9:30 a.m.	Tardy. 30 minutes.
Friday	04/08/94	9:30 a.m.	Absent. Said it was "recurring stomach problem."
Tuesday	04/12/94	9:45 a.m.	Tardy. 45 minutes.
Wednesday	04/13/94	9:15 a.m.	Absent. Had to go to court.
Monday	04/18/94	9:05 a.m.	Absent. Dentist appointment.
Thursday	04/21/94	9:30 a.m.	Tardy. 30 minutes.
Friday	04/22/94	9:40 a.m.	Tardy. 40 minutes.
Monday	04/25/94	11:00 a.m.	Missed deadline for important project to be completed at time of department meeting.
Tuesday	04/26/94	3:00 p.m.	Complaint from sales representative about John's rude phone manner.
Friday	04/29/94	10:15 a.m.	Absent. Had the flu.
Monday	05/02/94	11:30 a.m.	Absent. Unexplained.

## Your EAP Consultant

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The EAP is one of the most valuable resources you have available to you. You can call for a confidential consultation anytime you need assistance with a work performance issue. A second opinion can be very helpful when you are facing a complex performance problem. The EAP offers a professional and objective viewpoint. Most importantly, the EAP can help you to maintain a positive and productive work environment.

When you call MBC for a consultation, ask to speak with a Management Consultant who will:

- Assist in identifying performance decline that may reflect a personal problem with which the EAP can help.
- Consult about behavior that may indicate a personal problem.
- Listen objectively to your concerns and personal reactions to work performance problems.
- Advise you on how to approach the situation and what action to take.
- Work with you to determine if a formal referral is appropriate. The Management Consultant will guide you in presenting the problem and your expectations to the employee. S/he will also:
  - Help you keep the focus on job performance.
  - Notify you if the employee does not make an appointment within the timeframe you have specified in the Formal Referral Letter.
  - Notify you if the employee does not keep the first appointment.
- Provide support and guidance when planning a meeting with the employee to address work performance decline.
- Remind you how to combine a discussion of performance with the offer of personal, confidential assistance through the EAP.
- Give you limited feedback if the employee signs a consent to release information.

To ensure that you make a proper Formal Referral always call a Management Consultant. In order to make a formal referral, you must contact a Management Consultant.



## EAP Management Consultations

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To ensure you receive the assistance you need, we recommend that you have the following information with you when you call the EAP for a consultation:

### General Information

- Your name
- Department/agency and work location
- Name of employee
- Employee's job category
- Employee's social security number, if available

### Description of the Problem

- Performance issues occurring at work, including:
  - Quality and quantity of work
  - Relationships at work or with the public
  - Behavior/conduct
  - Absenteeism/tardiness – frequency and patterns
  - Other relevant performance factors
- History of problem
  - When the performance issues began
  - Whether the problem has been discussed with the employee and/or the Personnel Office
  - Whether the problem has been documented

### Progressive Action

- Job action either taken or pending that is relevant to the current problem
- The next step to be taken if the employee does not improve

Remember, asking for professional assistance is a good management decision. Calling the EAP does not commit you to anything. The decision to confront an employee, make a referral or take disciplinary action is yours.

## EAP Limitations

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There are several limitations to the services available through the EAP. These limitations include the following:

- A supervisor's formal referral does not count against or add to the number of sessions allowed under the employee's level of service. The number of sessions allowed for a formal referral is limited to the time it takes a clinician to make an assessment of the employee's problem, develop a corrective plan of action, identify options and refer the employee to the appropriate resource for counseling.
- MBC clinicians do **not**:
  - Make fitness-for-duty evaluations;
  - Perform drug testing
  - Participate in Worker's Compensation issues;
  - Make medical diagnoses;
  - Prescribe medications; and
  - Authorize time-off for either Industrial Disability or Non-Industrial Disability cases.
- Services **not** covered by the EAP include:
  - Inpatient or outpatient treatment for any medically treated illness;
  - Prescription drugs;
  - Formal supervisory referral based solely on substance abuse, with the absence of work performance issues;
  - Treatment or services for mental retardation or autism;
  - Counseling services beyond the number of sessions covered under the EAP;
  - Services by counselors who are not MBC counselors;
  - Counseling required by law or a court, or paid for by Worker's Compensation; and
  - Formal psychological evaluations and fitness-for-duty opinions.
  - Counseling, including legal consultation, on issues regarding worker's compensation claims, allegations of harassment, litigation related to State employment or disputes involving interpretation of State law and/or regulations.



## The Formal Referral Letter

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Preparing a Formal Referral Letter is a key step in making a formal referral to the EAP.

Listed below are the points you should include in a Formal Referral Letter. We suggest that you contact your Personnel Office for assistance in drafting the letter to ensure consistency with any existing procedures.

- Specific description of below standard behavior or performance.
- Purpose of the letter – to refer the employee to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- A notation of the timeframe in which the employee must contact the EAP (if the employee accepts the referral). Also note that you can make the appointment for the employee if s/he prefers.
- A statement that confidentiality will be maintained unless written consent is given by employee.
- A statement concerning your continued monitoring of behavior/performance and the need to proceed with disciplinary action if behavior/performance does not improve.
- A place for the employee and you to sign and date the letter that indicates whether the employee has chosen to accept or decline the referral.

If the employee accepts the referral and signs the Formal Referral Letter, you should mail a copy of the letter to the MBC Management Consultant with whom you consulted about the work performance problem.

Attn: Management Consultant  
MBC  
California Service Center  
400 Oyster Point Blvd., Suite 306  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

Please indicate whether you or the employee will be making the appointment.

## The Supportive Confrontation

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The Supportive Confrontation is one technique that enables you to objectively address performance issues during a formal referral. The Supportive Confrontation gives you the opportunity to combine your discussion of the performance problem with a genuine offer of assistance.

***Just as the name suggests, the Supportive Confrontation meeting is made up of two parts: support and confrontation. In this context, confrontation is not meant to be a negative, emotional exchange, but rather an objective, factual presentation of the work performance problem(s). Key to the effectiveness of this technique is the order of the meeting. The meeting should begin and end with actions that are supportive; keep the "confrontation" to the middle of the meeting.***

The success of the Supportive Confrontation depends on thorough preparation. The following steps will help you prepare for a Supportive Confrontation:

1. Select a time and place that will ensure your meeting is private. This discussion never should be held in the presence or within earshot of others.
2. Gather and organize your documentation, so that you have it on hand during the discussion.
3. Consult with your Personnel Office to ensure your meeting is consistent with specific department policies and procedures.
4. Be aware of your own expectations. Define acceptable and unacceptable performance.
5. Focus on behavior. Do not label or diagnose the personal problem in either your mind or at the meeting.



A supportive confrontation includes the following four major steps:

- I. Supportive - Reinforce the employee's value
- II. Confrontation - Address work performance and expectations
- III. Supportive - Offer the EAP
- IV. Follow-up

These steps, which are outlined below and on the following pages, illustrate how this technique works and provide suggestions on how you can conduct a successful Supportive Confrontation.



## I. Supportive – Reinforce the Employee's Value

1. Begin the meeting by showing concern for the employee. You may want to mention one or all of the following:
  - You have noticed a change in work performance.
  - Your concern today pertains to this change.
  - The change is not typical of past work habits.
2. Acknowledge the employee's past/present good performance. It is important to:
  - Let the person know of his or her value to the organization.
  - Give examples of past and present contributions (e.g., years of service, past performance, technical skills, previous level of dependability).
  - Tell the employee that you appreciate these contributions.





## II. Confrontation – Address Work Performance and Expectations

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*The key to this part of the meeting is to remain calm and objective.*

### 1. Identify expectations:

- Define specific expectations of the employee based on his or her job description.
- Convey concise, detailed information.

### 2. Specify performance concerns:

- Point out where performance has slipped compared to past work and behavior. Be honest and firm.
- Give specific, objective examples with dates, times and situations.
- Emphasize the seriousness of the situation.
- Focus on the job, not the individual. Avoid making judgments.
- Keep the discussion focused on work performance, regardless of the employee's response or efforts to bring his or her personal problems into the discussion.

### 3. Schedule timelines for improvement and a follow-up meeting:

- You and the employee should jointly agree on an action plan based on the employee's input and your guidance.
- Establish a timeline for improvement, appropriate to the level of the problem.
- Determine and agree on desired results.
- Set a time, date and place for the next meeting.

4. Describe the consequences.\* The employee needs to know that his/her performance problem is a serious situation and what s/he can expect if work expectations are not met. At this point, you should:
- Be specific without threatening.
  - Be prepared to follow through if performance does not improve.
  - Emphasize that the employee is responsible for resolving the present situation and avoiding future consequences.

\* You should consult with your Personnel Office prior to communicating consequences to the employee to ensure that any disciplinary action is consistent with your department's policy and procedures.

## Meeting Tips

The following tips will help you conduct a successful Supportive Confrontation meeting:

- Be honest and direct about the work problems the employee is experiencing. Do not cover up the facts or make light of the situation.
- Do not threaten the employee. Say, *"We have a problem to solve together,"* rather than, *"You have a problem."*
- Do not diagnose. Rather, suggest, *"If you are having a personal problem that is affecting your job, we have an EAP that can help. I strongly suggest that you call the EAP."*
- Remain firm, yet concerned. *"We'll meet again to review your progress in 10 days, but if something comes up before then, let me know."*
- Tell the employee that his/her decision to use the EAP is voluntary. Say, *"It is your choice."*
- Stress the confidentiality of the EAP. Say, *"Remember, if you use the EAP, it is strictly confidential. The details of your discussions remain between you and the EAP."*
- Emphasize expectations, timelines, consequences. *"We'll meet again to review your progress on (specific date), at which time I would like to see your work performance back to an acceptable level. I am afraid if it is not, I may have to take appropriate disciplinary action."*



### III. Supportive – Offer the EAP

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1. Reiterate your confidence in the employee and reinforce that your goal is to help him/her become a fully productive member of your work team once again.
2. Remind the employee that you do not need to know if personal problems are affecting work, but that if they are the EAP can help.
3. Provide information about the EAP as a confidential, supportive resource available free-of-charge to address any personal problems the employee may be having.
4. Offer the EAP using the Formal Referral Letter. We recommend that you encourage the employee to call MBC directly to make an appointment. Alternatively, you may make the appointment for the employee, ask the employee what time, date and location would be most convenient for her/him and contact MBC to arrange the appointment.

5. Explain to the employee that if s/he accepts your formal referral to the EAP, the MBC Management Consultant will let you know if the employee does not schedule and/or does not attend the appointment. In addition, tell the employee that s/he will be asked for a written consent to release information. If the employee signs the release, you will receive the following limited information about the employee's participation in the EAP:

*Attendance*

Is the employee participating in the EAP?

*Action Plan*

Was a plan developed to resolve or control the problem?\*

*Employee Agreement*

Does the employee appear motivated to follow through with the plan?

*Reasonable Accommodation*

Are there any special arrangements you should make to assist the employee in the implementation of the plan?

*Timeframe for Improved Performance*

Given the employee's active participation in the plan, when should you expect an improvement in work performance?

\* No confidential information regarding the nature of the problem or the specifics of the recommended treatment plan will be released.



## Sample Meeting Responses – How to Stay Focused on Work Performance

Even with thorough preparation, there is no way to predict how an employee will react to a Supportive Confrontation meeting. Many times, the employee will appreciate your support and welcome the opportunity to resolve problems and improve performance. In other cases, the employee may become defensive and emotional. The following chart provides a few examples of how an employee may react, what s/he might say, and how you can best respond to ensure that the meeting stays on track.

<u>Reaction/Defense</u>	<u>Employee's Comment</u>	<u>Supervisor's Response</u>
Excuses and sympathy	Employee will have a good reason for everything that happens. "You'd have the same problems I do if you had a spouse like mine."	"You may have problems at home, and I sympathize. But I am concerned about your performance here at work. And my records indicate that you are not doing a satisfactory job."
Apologies and promises	"I'm really sorry. You know that! I'll never do it that way again."	"I appreciate your apology. But what you did is serious."
Switching	"I know that, but look what a good job I've done on the new project."	"You have done well on the new project. But I want good work on all jobs, and you've had more problem jobs than successful ones lately. Look at the record."
Anger	"I can't believe it!! One mistake, and the roof falls in after 15 years of killing myself for this place."	"Getting angry won't help. I'm concerned about your performance, and I am not talking about a single mistake. Let's look at the record."
Tears and helplessness	"I don't know what to do. I'll never get out of this mess." (crying)	"I appreciate and understand your sadness. I want to help, which is why I set up this meeting. You've been a valuable part of our department."
Deflecting	"But everyone else is lax about that."	"I'm talking with you now about your work performance. Let's review this list of problems again."
Self-pity	"I knew this would happen. I've never been able to do anything right."	"I wouldn't be taking this time to talk with you if I didn't have faith in you. So let's move on to discuss what can be done. You know, our EAP would be an excellent resource."
Innocence	"It's not my fault. You let me down. I don't get any help at all around here."	"It is not a matter of fault. I depend on you to provide the excellent work you have done in the past. Let's talk about your specific work performance issues."



## IV. Follow-up

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Follow-up after the Supportive Confrontation meeting is as important as preparation before it. Some good guidelines for follow-up are:

- Keep all aspects of the situation private between you and the employee.
- Don't "walk on eggshells." It is counterproductive to be overly sensitive or empathic.
- Continue to monitor the employee's job performance and document improvement or decline.
- Make yourself available to the employee to provide guidance or discuss areas of concern the employee may have.
- Acknowledge and support positive behavior changes.
- Follow through with normal disciplinary procedures if necessary.



## Reasonable Accommodation

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An employee's inability to perform certain job duties may be the result of a physical or mental limitation rather than because of personal problems.

Federal law dictates that an employer must provide a reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitation of a qualified individual with a disability unless it can show that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the business. A "qualified individual" meets all prerequisites for performing the essential functions of a job (being considered for a job or enjoying equal benefits and privileges of a job) except any that cannot be met because of a disability.

Employers are advised to consult with their own legal counsel and/or Personnel Office for clarification of the reasonable accommodation requirement and how it relates to the Americans with Disabilities Act. MBC is not responsible for the legal fulfillment of this act.

## Putting It All Together

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As a supervisor, you can bring about a positive change. By concentrating on the quality of work, addressing performance problems proactively and clearly stating your expectations, you can maintain a productive work environment. Remember:

- Know the warning signs that signal a potential problem
- Use documentation to stay focused on work performance
- Consult the MBC Workplace Support Clinician
- Use the Supportive Confrontation process
- Monitor the employee's work performance
- Follow-up

And, most importantly, remember that you do not have to handle tough performance issues on your own. Call the EAP at **1-800-6-EAP-4-CA** for a confidential consultation anytime you need assistance.

## Myths & Facts About Using the EAP

Supervisors are sometimes hesitant to use one of their most valuable resources – the EAP. This reluctance is often due to one or more of the following myths:

### ■ SENSE OF BETRAYAL

You may think you are helping the employee by ignoring problems or allowing problems to continue without referring him/her to the EAP. You may feel as though you are “hurting” or “turning in” an employee when referring him/her to the EAP, when just the opposite is true.

### ■ FEAR OF HARM TO A VALUABLE EMPLOYEE

You may believe that you should protect an employee who has been a valuable employee, good worker, or who has seniority. In reality, referring an employee to the EAP is a positive step toward helping and keeping good employees.

### ■ FEELING OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

You may feel it is your responsibility to handle or correct the problem alone, and that a referral to the EAP is somehow an admission of failure on your part. In fact, a referral to the EAP typically improves the morale and productivity that are being diminished by an employee with a performance problem.

### ■ ESPRIT DE CORPS

You may have the misconception that keeping a problem within the unit or department is essential. “We take care of our own” does not apply when personal problems are resulting in a decline in job performance.

### ■ CONCERNS ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

Perhaps you are concerned that the information you share with the EAP will be passed on to the employee or management. Confidentiality is one of MBC’s highest priorities, and we will not share any information you discuss with us, unless you advise otherwise.

### ■ PERSONAL REACTIONS

You may be reluctant to address an employee’s problem because you are concerned that your personal reactions to the situation may be affecting your own performance as a supervisor. The EAP can help you resolve your concerns and approach the situation objectively.



## NOTES

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The California Department of Corporations is responsible for regulating health care service plans. The department has a toll-free number (1-800-400-0815) to receive complaints regarding health plans. If you have a grievance against the health plan, you should contact the plan and use the plan's grievance process. If you need the department's help with a complaint involving an emergency grievance that has not been satisfactorily resolved by the plan, you may call the department's toll-free number.